



Happenings at NRC for Sorghum, and AICSIP news

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Sunira Foods to market sorghum as gluten free food

Many people world over are allergic to gluten, the sticky protein found in wheat and other cereals. Sorghum is



Entrepreneurs noting the salient features of recipes made from Sorghum flour

gluten free, and hence can be utmost use to people allergic to gluten. Ms Sunira Chamaria, MD, Sunira Food Products Limited, Kolkata (www.sunirafoods.com) visited NRCS on 7 July 06 on invitation of the Director to initiate efforts for strengthening popularization of sorghum. Dr. CV Ratnavathi appraised about the sorghum grain quality and the possible recipes from sorghum flour. M/s Sunira foods has shown interest in liaison with NRCS for marketing sorghum products as health foods. NRCS offered premium quality sorghum flour suitable for bakery products and also pearled sorghum grain, and is in the process of entering into some form of arrangement with M/s Sunira Foods to jointly float a special purpose vehicle to aid sorghum popularization endeavour.

Celebration of ICAR Foundation day

The 16th of July being a Sunday during 2006, ICAR day at NRCS was celebrated in a novel way on 17th July. Girl students of 8th standard from a local government school at Rajendranagar were particularly chosen since we



School children being appraised about role of ICAR and NRCS

could establish a long term and sustained relation for another two years. It was a customized affair covering some of the topics from their science syllabi so as to link the text book theory to practical aspects of agriculture, with sorghum cropping as a specific example. The half-day program for the entire group started off with Dr. Ravi Kumar introducing the role of ICAR and NRCS. The children were exposed to Biotechnology research, insect rearing facility and jowar crop utilization and products. Drs KBRS Visarada, PG Padmaja, Sh. D Gopal Krishna and Mr. V Ravikumar also actively participated in this programme.

IMC and QRT meetings

The 14th Institute Management Committee (IMC) meeting was held at NRCS on 22 July, 2006. The members of IMC present were: Drs. SN Shukla, ADG (FFC), KPR Vittal, Pr. Scientist, CRIDA, Hyderabad, Sh. Govind Pawar (Farmers' representative, Umarga, Maharashtra), VS Subramanian, FAO, NAARM, Hyderabad, MS Raut, Pr. Scientist, CRS (NRCS) Solapur, Dr. SV Rao, Pr. Scientist NRCS, and Sh. KJ Mathai, Administrative Officer, NRCS



Deliberations of IMC meeting in progress

The QRT on Sorghum met on the same day afternoon under the Chairmanship of Professor SN Puri, Vice-chancellor, Central Agricultural University, Imphal. Other members attended the meeting included, Professor H Shekhar Shetty, and Dr. NP Saxena. The QRT team reported progress of review, and in turn was given an update on all administrative and management issues at NRCS. The chairman Prof SN Puri highlighted the new research thrusts for improving shoot fly and grain mold resistance, sorghum diversification and value-addition for biofuel production, and development of new rabi sorghum varieties. Matters related organization and management of AICSIP and NRCS in relation to likely future programme were also discussed.

Special consultation meeting to plan for sorghum improvement during XI plan

A special brainstorming session to plan for sorghum improvement during XI plan was held at NRCS on 20 July'06 under the chairmanship of Dr SN Shukla, ADG (FFC), ICAR. The other distinguished members who participated were: Drs NP Sexena, (member QRT), DM Hegde, Project Director, DOR, BC Virakthamath, Director, DRR, BVS Reddy, Principal Scientist ICRISAT and



Biosafety measures being discussed by IBSC

measures implemented by the institute. The meeting was attended by the member-secretary (Dr SV Rao) and other members (Drs. SL Kaul, TGN Rao, PG Padmaja, KBRS Visarada, BV Bhat, R Madhusudhana, and D Balakrishna).

IBSC recommended forwardal of the application of Dr Visarada for the field tests of transgenic materials to RCGM committee. She had sought permission for small scale field trials for evaluation of transgenic material (T₃ Stage) carrying *Cry1B* for resistance to stem borer and generation advancement of transgenic Bt plants with *Cry 1Aa* and *Cry 1B* for establishing homozygous lines. The committee went critically went through the biosafety compliance and preparedness of the centre. Later, the committee inspected biosafety measures practiced at the biotechnology laboratories, and was fully satisfied.

Meeting with QRT on dryland project at NRCS

The CRIDA Quinquennial Review Team led by Chairman Dr. Mahraj Singh visited NRCS on 14th July to understand the modus operandi of linked activities of the coordinated



Distinguished experts deliberating on new research priorities

representatives of AICSIP centers (RB Ghorade from Akola) Puran Chand from Palem, and K Ganesh Murthy from Coimbatore). Dr SN Shukla stressed the importance of increasing pace of work on both research and development to make substantial and overall impact. Director NRCS presented views on preliminary plans already drawn by NRCS for XI plan period. The group listed actions required to popularize sorghum production and consumption which is most important to restore the glory of the crop. Dr. SL Kaul, Principal Scientist coordinated this meeting.

Institute Biosafety Committee (IBSC) meeting

The Institute Biosafety Committee (IBSC) meeting was held on 5 July 06 under the Chairmanship of Director, NRCS. Dr. V Dashawanth Reddy, Head, CPMB, Osmania University (DBT-Nominee) and N. Sarala, Principal Scientist, DRR (External member) critically reviewed the on-going biotechnology research projects and biosafety



QRT members of CRIDA meeting with Directors of local ICAR institutes at Hyderabad

projects (AICSIP & AICRPDA) at both centres. Director of DRR along with his staff, representatives of DOR were also present during the meeting. Dr. Seetharama explained the linkages with CRIDA. QRT Chairman's suggestion that AICRPDA zonal locations be used for testing the sorghum materials was welcomed by all. This would help using a third party assessment for better evaluation of release proposals of newly bred sorghum cultivars.

Seminar by Dr. Venkataramana of Monsanto

Dr. Venkataramana of Monsanto Ltd. delivered a lecture on the topic "*Molecular genetics of plant and aphid interactions*" on 3 July, 2006 at NRC for Sorghum. Dr. Venkataramana deliberated on the role of *Arabidopsis thaliana* PAD4 gene in the modulation of premature leaf senescence associated with defense against the phloem-

feeding green peach aphid. The results of his Ph. D. work at the Kansas State University, USA, suggested that premature leaf senescence, which is involved in the programmed degradation of cellular components and the export of nutrients out of the senescing leaf, is utilized by plants to limit aphid growth and population build up. *PAD4* gene modulated the activation of senescence on the aphid-infestation that contributed to basal resistance to aphid. He presented his work on the structural and functional characterization of *PAD4* gene which encodes a protein with homology to lipases and esterases.

Launching of NAIP

National Agricultural Innovation Project was launched by Hon'ble Agricultural Minister Sh. Sharad Pawar at NASC, New Delhi on 26th July 2006 in the presence of dignitaries including DG - ICAR, and other scientific staff of various ICAR institutes and the World Bank officials. The financial limits for each consortium would be from 10-30 crore depending on the nature of the project. NRCS may develop proposal for projects on biofuel, value-addition and transgenic work, on competitive basis. Dr. B Dayakar Rao represented NRCS in the inaugural session.

Dr. Ratnavathi honoured



Dr. CV Ratnavathi, Sr. Biochemist at NRC Sorghum awarded one year complementary membership of the Society of Chemical Industry (SCI), London, UK, for the year 2005-2006. Dr. Ratnavathi was the referee for two papers on aflatoxins in the Journal of the Science of Food & Agriculture published by the SCI.

Revenue generation at CRS

The total revenue of Rs.1,71, 885 was generated at CRS (NRCS) Solapur through sale of parental lines and certified seeds, fodder and general sorghum grains realized in experiments and produce of other general crops like black gram, soybean, pigeon-pea, and bengal gram. *Congratulations to Dr Raut and his team!*

NRCS listed at new website

NRC sorghum is now also listed on www.indianbiotech.com. Readers are aware that our website is already listed in Google search engine i.e. www.google.com.

Promotion



Sh. K. Sanath Kumar, Personal Assistant was promoted to the post of Private Secretary (PS) from 4 July 2006. *Congratulations!*

NVRN Murty joins NRCS

Sh. NVRN Murty, joined NRCS as the new AFAO on 13th July, 2006. He was transferred from NRC on Meat, Hyderabad. NRCS staff wishes him all the best in all his future endeavours.



Open auction

NRCS conducted the open auction of condemnable items on 17 July 06 under the Chairman of the Auction Committee Dr. Aum Sharma, Head of AICRP on FIM, ANGRAU. Auction for each group of items (total 11 groups) was held and the total sale proceeding to the tune Rs.1,76,500 was realized. *Congratulations to administrative staff for this achievement.*

Family News



Miss Achala Prabhakar Bhat, daughter of Dr. Prabhakar, Sr. Scientist scored 89% in marks in the X standard board examinations of Maharashtra. She was a student of Little Flower Convent High School, Solapur. *Congratulations Achala, Keep it up!*

Meeting (M)/ Symposia (S)/ Workshop (W)/ Training (T) / Conference (C) attended

S. No	Name of the official	Participated in	Type	Venue	Date
1	S Indira & KJ Mathai	One-day Hindi work shop and meeting of Town Official Language Implementation Committee (TOLIC) organized by SC Rly.	W/M	Rail Nilayam, Secunderabad	4 July 06
2	CV Ratnavathi & IK Das	Six-monthly review meeting of the Network Project "Prevention and management of mycotoxins contamination in commercially important agricultural commodities"	M	RARS, Tirupati	7-8 July 06
3	N Seetharama	As chairman in the panel discussion at the workshop on "IP Protection and strategic issues for Public Private Partnership"	W	NAARM, Hyderabad	17 July 06.
4	KJ Mathai	Foundation training course for direct recruit combined cadre Administrative Officers / Finance & Accounts Officers of ICAR	T	NAARM, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad	19 July, to 30 Aug, 06
5	Vilas A Tonapi	Delivered lecture on Indian seed industry in world scenario and seed legislation at the workshop on "IP Protection and strategic issues for Public Private Partnership"	W	NAARM, Hyderabad	22 July 06.
6	K Ravindra Babu	Training programme on "National Agricultural Research Database" (NARD)	T	DIPA, ICAR, New Delhi	24-27 July 06
7	V Ravikumar	PERMIS net and launching intelligent reporting system	T	NASC., ICAR, New Delhi	21 -22, July 06
8	S Indira	21 st two-day national functional workshop on "Official Languages"	W	NIPE, Bangalore	28 - 29 July, 06
9	TG Nageshwar Rao	National Seminar on "Changing Agricultural Scenario- Status of Indian Farmer"	S	Osmania University, Hyderabad	31 July 06

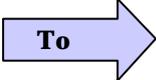
Official Tours

S. No	Name of the Official	Place visited	Dates	Purpose
1	S. Ravi Kumar & HS Gawali	Nandyal	17-18 July 06	To discuss future seed production plans during rabi and to get the farmers' opinion on economics of certified seed production activity of sorghum <i>vis a vis</i> rice.
2	CV Ratnavathi & A Annapurna	Tandur	17 July 06	To receive the training, and to bring the roti making machine
3	B Dayakar Rao	NASC, New Delhi	26 July 06	Launching ceremony of NAIP, a mega World Bank aided project
4	TGN Rao, Chari Appaji, S Ravi Kumar, HS Talwar, VR Bhagwat	Gunegal farm, CRIDA, Hyderabad	25 July 06	To observe SPV 1616 performance, and to discuss feasibility of hybrid seed production
5	KV Raghavendra Rao	KVK, Kakinada	28 July 06	Participate in Farmers' training programme.

Thought for the month

"The shortest way to do many things is to do only one thing at a time." - **Sydney Smiles**

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To 



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